

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 03453 100955Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
/066 W
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R 100906Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5650
INFO AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
AMCONSUL OPORTO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LISBON 3453

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT PO
SUBJ: PSD NATIONAL COUNCIL SESSION TO PAVE THE WAY
FOR SA CARNEIRO'S RETURN

REF: LISBON 2935

SUMMARY: SOUSA FRANCO AND HIS FORMER POLITICAL COMMISSION
MAY AVOID THE PARTY'S UPCOMING NATIONAL COUNCIL SESSION
DESIGNED TO SET THE STAGE FOR FORMER PSD LEADER SA CARNEIRO'S
RETURN AS DE JURE PARTY LEADER AT THE JULY 1 NATIONAL
CONGRESS. SINCE THEIR DRAMTIC DEFEAT APRIL 14, SOUSA FRANCO
AND HIS BAND OF MODERATES HAVE KEPT THEIR HEADS DOWN.
END SUMMARY.

1. THE PSD NATIONAL COUNCIL WILL MEET MAY 13-14 FOR THE
FIRST TIME SINCE THE SOUSA FRANCO GROUP'S PREEMPTIVE
CAPITULATION TO SA CARNEIRO SUPPORTERS APRIL 16. MENERES
PIMENTEL--NEW PSD PARLIAMENTARY GROUP LEADER AND CHAIRMAN OF
THE PARTY'S INTERIM DIRECTIVE COMMITTEE (REFTEL)-- DOES
NOT EXPECT THE MAY 13-14 NATIONAL COUNCIL SESSION TO DISCUSS
PARTY POLITICAL STRATEGY TO ANY SIGNIFICANT DEGREE. "NO
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FRESH RUPTURES," HE SAID, "ARE EXPECTED." RATHER, PIMENTEL
EXPECTS THE WEEKEND SESSION TO SET THE STAGE FOR CONSULATATIONS
BETWEEN THE PARTY'S DISTRICT AND MUNICIPAL COMMITTEES IN
PREPARATION FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY NATIONAL CONGRESS NOW
SCHEDULED FOR JULY 1 IN LISBON.

2. THERE IS INCREASED SPECULATION THAT FORMER PARTY LEADER

SOUSA FRANCO AND MOST OF HIS POLITICAL COMMISSION WHICH RESIGNED APRIL 8 MAY NOT ATTEND THE UPCOMING NATIONAL COUNCIL SESSION. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT "LEADING PSD PERSONALITIES" MAY JOIN THE SOCIALISTS IN THE WAKE OF SA CARNEIRO'S REASSERTION OF CONTROL OVER PSD OPPOSITION STRATEGY.

3. COMMENT: IF SOUSA FRANCO ET AL AVOID THE WEEKEND NATIONAL COUNCIL SESSION, PIMENTEL'S INTERIM DIRECTIVE COMMITTEE WILL HAVE A FREE HAND IN PAVING THE WAY FOR SA CARNEIRO'S DE JURE RETURN AS PARTY LEADER IN JULY. HOWEVER, EVEN IF THEY ATTEND, THEIR CHANCES OF STOPPING OR EVEN SLOWING SA CARNEIRO'S RETURN ARE SLIGHT. THEY CERTAINLY HAVE NOT PUT MUCH OF A FIGHT THUS FAR.
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